

CONGO (KINSHASA)

By George J. Coakley and Philip A. Szczesniak

Disruptions caused by renewed civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo [Congo (Kinshasa)] and the uncertain investment policies of the new Government were a setback to the proposed new mineral development needed to revitalize the mineral economy. Historically, the mining industry has accounted for 25% of gross domestic product (GDP) and about three-quarters of total export revenues. The near collapse of the economy since 1993, however, has made it difficult to sustain normal mining activities.

Congo (Kinshasa) is located in the heart of equatorial central Africa and has an area of 2,267,600 square kilometers, which is about one-quarter that of the United States. The country had a population of nearly 52 million in 1999 with the GDP per capita of \$710 (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2000, World factbook—Democratic Republic of the Congo, accessed February 26, 2001, at URL <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/cg.html>).

Most foreign exploration and cooperative mine rehabilitation ventures with the state-owned La Générale des Carrières et des Mines came to a halt by the end of 1998 following the outbreak of a new full-scale civil war in August 1998. During 1999, with a few exceptions mostly on projects to extract and export cobalt, activity in the copper and cobalt sectors was minimal (table 1). Mining of diamonds, most of which were of low-value industrial grades, by artisanal miners and by the major diamond producer Société Minière de Bakwanga continued strong. Government efforts to control the purchase and export of diamonds through

currency controls and the outlawing of traditional buyers or “comptoirs,” however, added confusion to the market.

Government and public interest groups in Europe and North America continued to put pressure on Congo (Kinshasa) to stop the sales of illegal diamonds used to support ongoing civil wars in the region. During 1999, there was also some renewal of artisanal mining of columbium (niobium)-tantalum, locally referred to as “coltan” in the Kivu Provinces.

Chevron Oil Congo and Total Fina Group were planning to expand offshore petroleum production facilities, which produced at a rate of 25,100 barrels per day in 1999.

For more extensive coverage of the mineral industry of Congo (Kinshasa), see the 1998 Minerals Yearbook, volume III, Mineral Industries of Africa and the Middle East.

Major Sources of Information

Ministère des Mines

3ème Niveau, Building Gècamines

Boulevard du 30 Juin

Kinshasa/Gombe,

République Démocratique du Congo

Telephone: (243)-(12)-21-538

Fax: (243)-(12)-21-607

E-mail: minimes@ic.cd

URL: <http://www.ministere-mines.gov.cd>

TABLE 1
CONGO (KINSHASA): PRODUCTION OF MINERAL COMMODITIES 1/

(Metric tons unless otherwise specified)

Commodity	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
METALS					
Cobalt:					
Mine output, Co content e/	1,647	2,000	3,500	1,500	1,000
Metal, Co content:					
Refinery (salable products) e/	3,422	3,667 r/	2,741 r/	3,531 r/	2,108
White alloy, matte e/	546	2,400 r/	300 r/	340 r/	200
Total 2/	3,968	6,067 r/	3,041 r/	3,871 r/	2,308
Columbium and tantalum:					
Columbite-tantalite concentrate:					
Gross weight kilograms	--	--	--	--	2,000
Nb content e/ do.	--	--	--	--	550
Ta content e/ do.	--	--	--	--	550
Copper:					
Mine output:					
By concentration or cementation	6,800	6,200	--	--	--
Leaching (electrowon)	22,600	43,800	39,651 4/	34,994 4/	36,000 e/
Total	29,400	50,000	39,651 4/	34,944 4/	36,000 e/
Metal:					
Smelter, primary:					
Electrowon (low grade)	22,600	43,800	40,000	40,000 r/	32,000 e/
Other	6,200	6,000	--	--	--
Total	28,800	49,800	40,000	40,000 r/	32,000 e/
Refinery, primary:					
Electrowon	--	--	--	--	--
Other	34,958 r/	40,147 r/	37,658 r/	38,236 r/	31,225
Total 2/	34,958 r/	40,147 r/	37,658 r/	38,236 r/	31,225
Gold 2/ kilograms	1,180	1,252	394	151 r/	207
Silver e/ do.	900	500	500	--	--
Zinc, mine output, Zn content 2/	4,516 r/	3,159 r/	1,660 r/	1,147 r/	--
INDUSTRIAL MINERALS					
Cement, hydraulic 2/	195,461 r/	240,790 r/	124,929 r/	134,324 r/	158,100
Diamond: 2/ 3/					
Artisinal thousand carats	16,345	15,437	15,558	19,252	15,328
MIBA do.	5,679	6,803	6,419	6,831	4,788
Total do.	22,024	22,240	21,977	26,083	20,116
Lime e/	50,000	50,000	50,000	25,000	25,000
Stone, crushed e/	200,000	200,000	200,000	100,000	100,000
MINERAL FUELS AND RELATED MATERIALS					
Coal, bituminous e/	10,000	10,000	5,000 e/	5,000	--
Petroleum:					
Crude 2/ thousand 42-gallon barrels	10,087	10,707 r/	10,146 r/	9,444 r/	8,650
Refinery products: e/					
Liquefied petroleum gas e/ do.	5	1	1	1	1
Gasoline do.	365	89	89	89	89
Kerosene and jet fuel do.	545	135	135	135	135
Distillate fuel oil do.	365	90	90	90	90
Residual fuel oil do.	1,095	280	280	280	280
Refinery fuel and losses 5/ do.	545	135	135	135	135
Total do.	2,920	730	730	730	730

e/ Estimated. r/ Revised. -- Zero.

1/ Table includes data available through February 2001.

2/ Reported data by Central Bank report: Economic Activity--Volume of Production--Mining and Metallurgical Production, August 2000.

3/ An estimated 20% of total diamond production is gem quality.

4/ Reported figure.

5/ Includes "Other."